

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 05336 210948Z

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1800

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5336

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV KS US

SUBJ: KIM DONG-JO AFFAIR: JAWORSKI LETTER TO O'NEILL

REF: A. STATE 143278, B. SEOUL 5092, C. STATE 153135,

D. STATE 154407, E. SEOUL 5280, F. STATE 156881,

G. STATE 156882

1. EMBASSY IS CONCERNED OVER BOTH TONE AND CONTENT OF THE JUNE 19 LETTER FROM JAWORSKI TO O'NEILL. GIVEN THE LIST OF PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED COPIES AND PAST EXPERIENCE IN THIS AFFAIR, WE MUST ASSUME THAT, IF CONTENT OF LETTER HAS NOT ALREADY BEEN LEAKED, IT SOON WILL BE. FOR THE REASONS GIVEN BELOW, WE FORESEE SERIOUS PROBLEMS HERE IN EXPLAINING THE LETTER AND IN GAINING FURTHER ROKG COOPERATION IN LIGHT OF IT.

2. IN TONE THE ENTIRE LETTER APPEARS HERE TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO PLACE THE ROK IN THE WORST POSSIBLE LIGHT AND TO OVERLOOK PROGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. BEGINNING WITH NOTING THAT THE ROKG DID NOT APPROACH THE COMMITTEE FOLLOWING PASSAGE OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 1194, THE LETTER THEN PLACES ALL INITIATIVE AND FLEXIBILITY ON THE JAWORSKI SIDE, AND CONCLUDES THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO SUBSTANTIAL INDICATION
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OF COOPERATION. THE ROKG, WE BELIEVE CORRECTLY, SEES THE MATTER IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT AND IS OF THE OPINION THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE AND THAT A SOLUTION IS NOW POSSIBLE. TO HAVE ALL OF THE EFFORTS MADE TO DATE AND THE ADJUSTMENT IN ROK POSITIONS DISMISSED IN THIS MANNER IS LIKELY TO INCLINE THE ROKG FURTHER TO THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER (REF E) THAT JAWORSKI DOES NOT WANT TO

SETTLE THE MATTER EXPEDITIOUSLY.

3. IN THE MORE SPECIFIC AREA OF FACT, WE FIND THE JAWORSKI LETTER TO BE AT ODDS WITH OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATTER HERE. ON JUNE 15 (SEOUL TIME) INSTRUCTIONS WERE SENT TO AMBASSADOR KIM TO SEEK A MEETING WITH JAWORSKI (REF B). IN REF C THE DEPARTMENT INDICATED THAT THESE INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND THAT THE ROK EMBASSY WAS ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR KIM AND JAWORSKI. IN REF D WE WERE ADVISED THAT JAWORSKI COULD NOT RETURN TO WASHINGTON FOR A MEETING ON JUNE 16 BUT THAT PETER WHITE AND COUNSELOR PARK KUN-WOO MET ON THAT DATE AND A KIM-JAWORSKI MEETING WAS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 19. NONE OF THE ABOVE IS REFLECTED IN THE JAWORSKI LETTER IN WHICH HE TAKES CREDIT FOR SETTING THE JUNE 19 MEETING AND NO MENTION IS MADE OF THE WHITE-PARK MEETING (PARA D REF G).

4. OF GREATER CONCERN, HOWEVER, IS THE STATEMENT (PARA F REF G) THAT AT THE JUNE 19 MEETING QUOTE AMBASSADOR KIM'S INDICATED PROCEDURE, WHICH IS NO DIFFERENT THAN THAT ORIGINALLY OFFERED AND REJECTED MONTHS AGO, CANNOT BE ACCEPTED NOW END QUOTE. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, ORIGINAL OFFER OF ROK WAS A TELEPHONE CALL TO THE SPEAKER FOLLOWED BY A CONFIRMATION LETTER FROM KIM DONG-JO. PRESENT PROPOSAL, WHICH ROKG HAS BASICALLY ACCEPTED AND WHICH IT VIEWS AS A JAWORSKI PROPOSAL, IS FOR QUESTIONS TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBMITTED AND FOR KIM DONG-JO TO RESPOND TO THOSE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS. TO MAKE, AS JAWORSKI'S LETTER DOES, THE QUESTION OF ASSURANCES THE WHOLE OF THE PROPOSAL IS A VERY SERIOUS DISTORTION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY IS AWARE THAT RECENT LETTER MUST BE VIEWED AS ONE FURTHER STEP BY JAWORSKI TO INCREASE PRESSURE ON THE ROK. IT IS PRECISELY FOR THIS REASON THAT WE ARE CONCERNED THAT CONTENTS WILL AT SOME STAGE BECOME PUBLIC. AS THE MIDDLE-MAN IN THIS SITUATION, IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION. EVEN IF THE LETTER REMAINS PRIVATE, CAN WE ALLOW THIS DISTORTED PICTURE TO STAND WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP? HERE IT APPEARS WE HAVE THREE OPTIONS. FIRST WOULD BE THROUGH CONSULTATIONS AT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT AND PLACE THE CURRENT STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS IN THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE. SECOND WOULD BE TO REMOVE THE DEPARTMENT FROM ITS MIDDLE-MAN ROLE IN LIGHT OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS MATTER IS BEING HANDLED. THIRD WOULD BE TO DO NOTHING IN THE HOPE THAT MATTERS WOULD WORK THEMSELVES OUT. EMBASSY BELIEVES FIRST OPTION WOULD

BE BEST IN TERMS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE ROK, BUT
REALIZES DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN SUCH A COURSE. SECOND
OPTION WOULD AT LEAST PLACE PARTIES ON NOTICE THAT DEPART-
MENT IS NOT WILLING TO BE A PARTY IN ATTEMPTS TO MISLEAD
THE CONGRESS AS TO WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE TO DATE AND MIGHT
SERVE AS A BACK PRESSURE ON JAWORSKI. THIRD OPTION LEAVES
US WITHOUT DEFENSE TO PROBABLE ROK REACTION TO CONTENTS
OF LETTER BEING MADE PUBLIC.

6. WE BELIEVE THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN
AT THIS TIME TO POSITION TO BE TAKEN BY BOTH DEPARTMENT
AND EMBASSY IN EVENT LETTER BECOMES PUBLIC. IT WILL BE
OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE THAT BOTH DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY
HAVE SIMILAR LINE ON THIS ONE. IN THE VIEW FROM SEOUL IT
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SEEMS THAT THE LEAST WE SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO DO
WOULD BE TO NOTE OUR VIEW THAT THE ROK HAS BEEN IN SERIOUS
DISCUSSION WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF, HAS MADE PROGRESS
TOWARD RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE AND CONTINUES TO SEEK A
SOLUTION CONSISTENT WITH THE VIENNA CONVENTION.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON VIEWS ON THIS MATTER AS
SOON AS THEY ARE DEVELOPED.
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